

**RAYMOND PRICE**

# Firmly held values

In 1950, at the start of my senior year at Yale, I was approached by a lower classman whose uncle, New York investment banker Prescott Bush — George Bush's father — was the Republican nominee for the U.S. Senate from Connecticut. The nephew said his uncle wanted a small group of students to help his campaign, and would I organize them? I did, and for the remainder of the campaign traveled with Pres Bush to one Connecticut town after another.

He was an imposing candidate, a gentleman of the old school, with a rigorous sense of right and wrong and a genuine passion for public service. One result of that experience was that I developed an enormous respect for Pres Bush and his family, and stayed in touch during his later Senate career. Another was that I followed with special interest the career of his son George, with whom also I shared many mutual friends and associates. In the 1968 campaign, I was part of Richard Nixon's inner circle, and then Rep. Bush topped my list of choices for vice president on the Nixon ticket. I think I know pretty well what makes him tick.

To those who know him, George Bush will probably turn out to be the least mysterious of modern presidents. But he may surprise many whose perceptions are formed from old newspaper clippings.

Throughout his career, commentators have looked at his performance in one role and from that forecast confidently how he would perform in the next. But in his case, this doesn't work.

One of his key personal characteristics is an intense mission orientation. Characteristically, he approaches a new job by analyzing its key requirements and adapting himself to them. As vice president, he saw loyalty and deference as key. Thus he carefully remained in Ronald Reagan's shadow until freed from it by the Republican convention. As his party's nominee, his new mission was to erase his opponent's 17-point lead in the polls and win the White House. He did so, with a vigor and skill that flabbergasted those

who, projecting from his performance in earlier, different roles, had dismissed him as a hopelessly inept campaigner.

Just as nomination freed him from the constraints of the vice presidency, election has freed him from the requirements of campaigning. The characteristic Bush move now is to analyze what it takes to be a successful president, and set about in a methodical way to do it.

Mr. Bush does not come to the presidency with a rigid ideological agenda, but he does come with firmly held personal and political values and a practiced eye for what works and what doesn't in world and national affairs.

He will surround himself with people who represent a philosophical mix, but share a dedication to professionalism in politics and public service and, importantly, a team spirit.

It's not his nature to wave a big stick, but he does believe in the use of American force when necessary. His manner is modest, but he can be firm when he's sure he is right. He's not an arm-waver; neither passion nor eloquence is his forte. His persuasion will be more the quiet kind. In manner, his will be a comfortable

presidency, just as he and his wife Barbara are comfortable people to have around. But he will also expect both performance and loyalty from those who serve in his administration.

To latter-day cynics, it sounds corny to say that a person was bred for public service. But in George Bush's case, it happens to be true. He comes from a rigorous tradition of duty, honor and country. From earliest childhood he was taught that rights carried responsibilities, and privileges carried obligations. In World War II, he enlisted in the Navy on his 18th birthday and became the Navy's youngest fighter pilot — not because war was fun, but because helping fight the war was a citizen's duty.

When President Gerald R. Ford asked him to take over as CIA director at a critical point in the then-embattled CIA's history, Mr. Bush did not want the job. He saw it as an almost certain death knell for his own national political ambitions. But he concluded that if the president of the United States needed him at the CIA he had a duty to say yes, whatever the personal cost. It was as simple as that.

This tells something important about a Bush presidency: not only about what he expects of himself, but also of what he expects from his team. Stay tuned.

The Washington Post  
The New York Times  
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